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ABSTRACT

This executive summary reports on an investigation of the impact of parent-absence on the socialization of black children. Four different studies were conducted by the Parent Improvement and Child Socialization Project among respondents identified through lists of inmates supplied by the D.C. Department of Corrections and by visits to penal institutions in the Washington Metropolitan area. In the first study specially-designed culturally relevant questionnaires were used to follow the academic and personality development of a group of black children through three years of schooling. The second study employed a Transactional Analysis approach to assess ways black female prisoners viewed separation from their children. In the third study, 121 children of separated, divorced and incarcerated parents were examined on several intellectual/academic achievement performance variables. The fourth study examined types of single-parent families in relationship to employment/unemployment, knowledge and availability of supplemental child care, community involvement, absent-spouse status and effects of maternal employment on the child. Among the five categories of parent absent families (divorce, desertion, separation, death and incarceration) differences were observed in two major areas: (1) socio-psychological variables affecting parent-absent families, and (2) the impact of various social systems and their interaction with the family. (Author/RH)

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Parent Imprisonment And Child Socialization

RESEARCH PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This study was conducted to provide a systematic investigation of the impact of parent-absence on the socialization of black children. It studied the child's locus of control, self-concept, attitudes toward parents, academic achievement, and general interest. These factors were expected to vary as a function of the removal of the parent from the home. They were, therefore, expected to have implications for the degree of adjustment of the child and the family unit. Income maintenance, role structure in the family unit, disciplinary strategies, family cohesion, and involvement of relatives in family functions were other variables under investigation.

Goals

The overall goals of the study were:

1. To study the economic, social, and psychological adjustment and support of the family.
2. To examine the social services currently available to and utilized by the family.
3. To evaluate child socialization variables (self-concept, parent-child interactions, and economic conditions).

This approach advanced the general postulate that sociocultural forces hold good or ill potentialities for children of separated families. It rested, moreover, on a general logic of

situation-response evidence and inference. With the family unit as the focus, research variables ranged in magnitude from the community-social system at one extreme, to patterns of intrafamily functioning at the other end.

The investigator attempted to answer the following six research questions:

1. How do the adjustive mechanisms of the child respond to family stresses?
2. How are parent-child relationships affected by parental absence?
3. How does the nature of the family contacts during the period of separation affect parent-child relationships and the social, psychological and educational adjustments of the child?
4. How does the separation of a parent affect the child's self-concept?
5. How do Black female prisoners perceive the effects of incarceration on their children who are left in the care of guardians?
6. How do the perceptions of imprisoned parents differ from the absent families?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design used for this study was cross-sectional and longitudinal. These designs were selected since they offered

the advantage of observing behavior occurring at a specific point in time as well as at a series of points over time. For example, it allowed for a comparison of two age groups which began at different loci in time (that is, the first graders used at the beginning of the study were compared two years later with the third graders who started at the same time). This provided relevant information regarding the stability of the measures used, which increased the internal validity of the scores on the tests which were used.

Sample

Prospective respondents for the experimental sample were not selected randomly because of the prohibitive cost and time. Instead, respondents were identified through lists of inmates supplied by the D.C. Department of Corrections and by visits to penal institutions in the Washington Metropolitan area. Families were recruited whose spouses were incarcerated in Lorton, the D.C. Jail, Hagerstown, and the Maryland House of Corrections. The following criteria were used to select the experimental group:

1. The inmates were married and had children in the public schools.
2. The inmates had at least three years remaining before parole or release.
3. The inmates were living with their spouses prior to incarceration.

Instruments

In order to gather information for the study, a set of questionnaires had to be found that contained culturally relevant terms which would be understood by all respondents. This was necessary since the contents and wording of already existing questionnaires were found to be irrelevant and/or inappropriate for the proposed respondent group after there had been a pilot test and critiques were made by teachers, parents, and other professionals in the child development areas.

DATA COLLECTION

Interviewers

Interviewers were, for the most part, students from Howard University. The selection of these students as research assistants was based on the skill needs of the project. Therefore, a major effort was made to get graduate research assistants whose academic majors and/or experiences were related to the criminal justice system and/or the family. Six of the graduate research assistants were specializing in the area of criminal justice, and the others were in cognate areas. One of the positive aspects of this matching of academic training with the project was the mutuality of the benefits for the student's learning experience and the project.

Interview Process

Interviews were mostly conducted in teams of two - one male and one female, rarely two females, but never two males. One

person administered the parent questionnaire and the other person administered the child questionnaire. On some occasions interviewers worked singly so that one person administered both the parent questionnaire and the child test battery.

All interview packets were returned to the project office the following day for evening interviews whether or not they had been completed. Interview packets were returned to the office the same day when the interviews were conducted during the workday. Those packets which were not completed were put into a file for rescheduling. Each completed interview was checked by two senior project staff for legibility and correct coding. If there were errors in the completed questionnaires, they were returned to the respective interviewers for correction. Correctly completed questionnaires were recorded in the master log.

Since the interviews were conducted over a three-year period with the same families, it was very important to maintain good relationships with family members. Therefore, a random sampling of families was contacted periodically to make sure that they were satisfied with the project procedures and interviewer performance.

Data Analysis

The research design was a multiple time-series and quasi-experimental arrangement. The data were analyzed in the three stages of screening, contrasting, and linking. Each domain of the variables was screened at each time interval. This facili-

tated the reduction of the data to a manageable size for studying interactions among the various domains. The experimental groups were contrasted with the control group and differences were observed. The data were linked at each time point that screening occurred. This enabled the investigator to establish relationships among the domains between two time periods and across all time intervals.

Four Studies Within the Project:

The Parent Imprisonment and Child Socialization Project was divided into four separate studies for convenience and in order to abstract more information on a variety of aspects of parent-absence. A brief description of these studies together with the findings and recommendations are presented below:

1. Community-Social Variables Related to Black Parent-Absent Families

Psychological and systemic variables affecting Black single-parent families were studied within a theoretical framework. "The Push-Pull Management Theory" was developed, which describes the forces that maintain or impede the functioning of the Black parent-absent family. To test this theory, 200 Black parent-absent families divided into five groups (male, incarcerated, separated, divorced and widowed) responded to a series of questionnaires.

The general research strategy was to investigate some societal systems (economic, legal, educational, health, recreational,

political, and the media) that interact with the family system and the child both directly and indirectly. The investigation primarily focused on how the societal impact is perceived by both adults and children in the family. In addition to perceptions, the research tapped the nature of each system's impact on the children and the family as an entity. Thus, data from a series of questionnaires were generated on the interfacing of societal systems with Black family systems and the way children were affected by, and respond to, these impinging systemic forces.

Research Hypotheses

It was hypothesized that different types of Black parent-absent families would differ considerably from each other. These differences were analyzed in two areas. The first area of analysis related to characteristics which are enduring and quite stable. It was at this point that the coping mechanisms that are functional for the Black family and its members were analyzed. The examination in this area resulted in vital data on the following:

1. Role structures in the family unit.
2. Family cohesion.
3. Parent-child relationships.

The second set of hypotheses related to characteristics of the Black family and its members which are transitory and highly susceptible to change: immediate social, economic, or emotional conditions; problems and strains; general adjustments; self-concept; and disciplinary strategies adopted by the family unit.

METHODOLOGY

The dependent variables investigated were: attitude towards parents, family cohesion, disciplinary strategies, income maintenance, involvement of relatives in family function, role structure in the family unit and the personality variables of self-concept and academic achievement. The perceived quality of community variables, in terms of the social services currently available and utilized, were also analyzed as dependent variables.

The general measurement plan of the study was to follow the academic and personality development of a group of Black children through three years of schooling to see the effects of parent-absence on their personal, social and educational development.

Since the contents and wording of existing questionnaires were considered irrelevant and inappropriate for the respondents in this study, the researcher designed a set of questionnaires that contained culturally relevant terms. The revised interview schedule was similar to the parent questionnaires utilized by the ETS-Head Start Longitudinal Study entitled, "Disadvantaged Children and Their First School Experiences." Both interview schedules were organized into three sections referring to the child in school, the community, and in personal and family matters. Also, in both studies, information was gathered on the child's locus of control techniques and learning strategies. The purpose of the parent interview was to describe the physical and

social environment in which both parent and child were living. The child interview was composed of modified psychological tests. A newly developed test "Racial Self-Awareness" (RASA) was also administered to the children.

Subjects

A total of 200 parent-absent families divided into 5 groups: incarcerated (n=46), separated (n=67), divorced (n=48), widowed (n=19), and male headed (n=20) families were interviewed. The incarcerated, separated, divorced and widowed groups were all female headed families. The incarcerated husbands had to be in prison over the entire period of the study (i.e., three years). Their spouses had to remain married during this time. For the women in the separated group, their husbands had moved out of the household, but did not obtain a divorce. The husbands of the widowed women had died prior to initiation of the Project. The male headed families were comprised of a combination of widowed, divorced and separated males. There were no husbands with incarcerated wives in the study.

A random number table was used to select which of the respondent's children would be interviewed. Only one child was interviewed within each family. The children ranged in age from 5 to 15 years old. Fifty-seven percent of the children interviewed were female.

Interview Procedure

Interviewers were recruited from among the student body at Howard University. They were given an in-depth review of the project questionnaires, forms, and proper coding methods. Over the course of the study, interviews were conducted in teams of two. The teams of interviewers consisted of one Black male and one Black female and sometimes two females. One person administered the parent questionnaire and the other person administered the child questionnaire.

When the parent-absent families were contacted by project personnel, they were informed of the goals, procedures, and qualifications for the study. If a family was qualified and interested in participating in the study, an appointment was made to interview them in their home. Each family was interviewed six times over a four-year period. There was a six-month interval between repeated interviews.

During the one-hour period, one interviewer tested the parent and the other interviewer tested the child in separate rooms. The sex of the interviewer was always matched with that of the child being interviewed. The entire set of questionnaires was given during each interview period. The ordering of the questionnaires was counterbalanced over the six interviews.

Results and Discussion

A considerable amount of data was collected from the series of interviews with each family. The significant differences

between parent-absent families are discussed under the following major headings:

A. Major socio-psychological variables affecting parent-absent families. These included:
   1) Role structures in the family unit
   2) Family cohesion
   3) Parent-child relationships

B. Impact of societal systems and the interaction of these with the family. Included among these external impacting forces were:
   1) Legal
   2) Educational
   3) Economic
   4) Health
   5) Recreational
   6) Religious
   7) Transportation

A series of x^2 tests were computed to determine differences between the five types of parent-absent groups and differences across interviews. Only results that were significant at the .05 level were discussed. When results were significant at either the .01 level or the .001 level, they were also noted.

Major Socio-Psychological Variables

The reason for parent separation was important in influencing roles assumed by different members of the family. Across

all family types, children played an important role in household maintenance activities. However, only among the separated families were children contributing significantly to the financial status of the family (x^2 = 40.01 p/.001). This was probably due to the fact that this group was among the lowest in family income of all the groups. Hence, it was necessary that some children assume a financial support role within the family.

Even though the incarcerated group also had a relatively low mean family income, they did receive more financial support from extended family members than any of the other groups (x^2 = 16.26, p/.05). In addition, extended members of the incarcerated families also played a more significant role in household maintenance (x^2 = 20.00, p/.05), disciplining the children (x^2 = 31.54, p/.05), and in general family planning (x^2 = 34.46, p/.05) than in the other groups. Extended family members were also more important in conflict resolution within the incarcerated and separated families than in the case of a more permanent separation, such as among widowed and divorced families (x^2 = 33.18, p/.01).

A number of items within the interview pertained to indications of family cohesion after separation. Among all parent-absent groups, the majority of respondents indicated that cohesiveness within the nuclear family was either very good or good. However, a significantly greater number of respondents within the separated and divorced groups, than within other groups,

indicated that there was considerable variability in ideas, values, and interests among members of the family ($\underline{x}^2 = 28.32$, $\underline{p}/.05$). Perhaps this variability reflected similar differences in the parents' ideals, values, and interests prior to their separation.

There were considerably more responses of neutral to very poor when rating relationships with in-laws than when rating the nuclear family. A similar number of respondents rated their in-laws in the negative direction as they did in the positive direction. These results were consistent across all parent-absent groups. The need for positive relationships with extended family members is probably more important for parent-absent families than for families with both parents present. Hence, the negative ratings observed have important implications for family cohesiveness.

Divorced parents were significantly more negative towards the absent spouse than other single parents ($\underline{x}^2 = 20.53$, $\underline{p}/.01$). Negative feelings which probably existed prior to divorce could easily be aggravated if alimony, child support, and visitation rights added to the dispute. Obviously, this made it more difficult to maintain family solidarity.

The absence of a parent can have important implications for parent-child relationships. For example, parents from the separated group indicated that they spent considerably less time with

their children than women from the other parent-absent groups ($\underline{x}^2 = 86.34$, $\underline{p}/.05$). Thirty-two out of 72 parents in the separated group reported that they spent little time with their children. On the other hand, some separated parents indicated that they have no choice but to be with their children most of the time. For example, separated parents took their children with them to visit friends more often than parents in other groups. In contrast, divorced parents tended not to take their children with them when visiting friends ($\underline{x}^2 = 11.12$, $\underline{p}/.05$). One possible explanation for this result is that the average divorced woman was in better financial shape than other women included in this study, and could afford to pay other people to watch their children when visiting friends.

None of the males reported using corporal punishment with their children. However, women with husbands in prison employed significantly more corporal punishment and took away their children's rights more often than other single-parent mothers ($\underline{x}^2 = 25.35$, $\underline{p}/.05$). This may have been due to the anxiety aroused in knowing that their husbands were in prison and that their children could also end up there if strict discipline was not enforced. This anxiety hypothesis was also suggested by the frequency with which the incarcerated group reported taking their children to church. Of the parents who went to church, more women with husbands in prison took their children to church

than any other group. Again, it seemed that they may have been using religion as a means to prevent their children from following their fathers to prison.

Impact of Societal Systems

A number of societal forces significantly affect the attitudes and behaviors of parent-absent families. Perceptions of the impact of these systems affected the parent-absent family groups in significantly different ways. Male-headed families were more positive about the schools their children were attending than female-headed families. The separated and the divorced groups were the most negative about the school ($\underline{x}^2 = 15.87$, $\underline{p}/.05$). In explanation, additional results suggest that male-headed families had more resources to provide better educational opportunities for their children than female-headed families.

Among all of the groups, the incarcerated group parents perceived that their children were having more difficulty getting along with teachers than other children ($\underline{x}^2 = 14.52$, $\underline{p}/.05$). This finding has important implications for teachers and school psychologists who must work with these children. Again, these parents' anxiety about the child's social interactions may have been related to their perception of a need for strict discipline both within and outside the home.

Most of the parent-absent families indicated that they visited their family doctor more than any other individual to get

advice or help with health-related problems. However, separated and incarcerated families used their neighborhood clinics rather than private medical facilities (x^2 = 45.52 $p/.001$). These two groups were shown to have the least financial resources and, therefore, had to make use of less expensive public facilities. In addition, the separated and incarcerated groups reported more child and family care centers in their neighborhoods than the other groups (x^2 = 18.76, $p/.05$).

It was very interesting to find that parent-absent families with an incarcerated spouse were less in contact with the legal system than any other group (x^2 = 17.02, $p/.05$). This may indicate that the spouses of incarcerated parents became disillusioned with the legal system that sent their husbands to jail. In addition, because of their prior contact with legal authority, they may have been more aware of legal practices and could assume some of these responsibilities on their own.

In terms of political voting patterns, wives of incarcerated spouses responded differently than any other group. Twice as many women with imprisoned mates indicated that they had never voted in any election as indicated that they had voted. The majority of respondents in the other parent-absent groups reported that they had often participated in political elections (x^2 = 26.09, $p/.001$). One of the reasons given by the wives of incarcerated mates for not voting in the previous election was their inability to get to the polls. This was not a primary excuse

within any of the other groups (x^2 = 35.45, $p/.05$). The incarcerated group, more than any other group, also reported a feeling of powerlessness to act through political means (x^2 = 27.29, $p/.001$). This lack of political motivation combined with traveling problems, low educational levels, and the fact that they were younger than parents in other groups might explain the low voting frequency.

The highest percentage of women without jobs was within the incarcerated group. In contrast, the largest percentage of women with paid jobs was in the divorced group (x^2 = 16.11, $p/.01$). The data also indicated that divorced parents had considerably more years of education than parents in any of the other groups. This would obviously be related to their holding a paid job. Conversely, the incarcerated group reported less formal education, which probably made it more difficult for them to find paid jobs.

When women in the separated and incarcerated groups were employed, they indicated that they had to travel farther to get these jobs. Similarly, when incarcerated and separated women were employed, they had begun working at their jobs more recently than parents in other groups. Further, male-headed families were employed at their most recent job much longer than the female-headed groups (x^2 = 138.20, $p/.001$). Also, a greater percentage of the male-headed families were more often self-employed than any of the female-headed families (x^2 = 15.16, $p/.01$).

In looking at the effects of recreational opportunities, a dichotomy seemed to take place among the five groups. In response to a number of different questions, women in the separated and incarcerated groups reported that recreational facilities were not available, while the widowed, divorced and male parent-absent groups reported that recreational facilities were available. This dichotomy was most evident when responding to the availability of summer day camps ($x^2 = 15.41$, $p/.05$) and after-hour school programs ($x^2 = 19.38$, $p/.05$). This probably relates back to the lower economic resources and more frequent geographic mobility of these groups. For example, the separated and incarcerated groups had changed residence within the last three years significantly more often than any of the other groups ($x^2 = 43.22$, $p/.05$). Therefore, it is possible, that even if recreational opportunities existed, they would probably not be aware of its availability.

In summary, many significant differences among the parent-absent groups were observed with respect to variables affecting their attitudes and behavior. This will have important implications for psychologists, sociologists and other professionals who must deal with the growing phenomenon of the Black parent-absent family.

2. Perceptions by Black Female Prisoners of the Effects of Separation from their Children

The present research employed a Transactional Analysis approach to assess ways in which Black female prisoners viewed

separation from their children. Data were collected on a) the prisoner's view of herself; b) how she perceived the child's view of her; c) how she perceived the guardian's view of her; and d) how she perceived the child's and guardian's view of each other. For a more in-depth understanding of these perceptions projective data were also collected. In addition, as related to the observed perceptual problems, some alternative approaches to female correctional programming will be discussed.

METHOD

Sample

The 60 women who volunteered to participate in the study were all Black females incarcerated for a wide variety of crimes. They were imprisoned at two penal institutions: one situated in West Virginia and the other located in Maryland. Washington, D.C. was the listed home for all these prisoners. The women were all mothers, with the majority having at least two children. They ranged in age from 20 to 35 years.

Instruments

A 100-item questionnaire based on Transactional Analytical theory (Berne, 1961) was given to each of the inmates (Savage, Adair, and Roberts, 1973). This questionnaire was designed to assess an incarcerated mother's perceptions of herself, her child, and the child's guardian. It focused mainly on feelings about communication among these individuals.

The Separation-Attachment Apperception Test (SAAT) consisting of a set of 20 pictures was developed to examine the underlying psychological dynamics pertaining to separation of mother and child (Savage, Adair, and Roberts, 1973). Eight of the pictures were selected for use with this prison sample.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered in a five-person group setting. Prisoners were asked to rate each question on a scale from 1 to 5. The investigator monitoring the questionnaire administration provided assistance to those inmates who had problems following directions, reading the questionnaire, or marking answer sheets that were provided. Responses to the items were interpreted with respect to the Transactional Analytical model. Major concepts employed from Transactional Analysis were ego states, time structuring, stroking, communication, and life positions.

SAAT cards were administered individually, in random order, and the responses were recorded on audio-tape. Prisoners were asked to tell a story about each picture, elaborating on what happened prior to the event in the picture, what was happening at the time, and what would happen in the future. All responses on the SAAT were transcribed and scored on the following dimensions:

1. Depression - feelings of sadness and hopelessness
2. Elation - feelings of joy and sadness
3. Uncertainty - feelings of doubt and mistrust
4. Internal Control - the degree to which the character in the picture felt responsible for her own feelings and behavior
5. External Control - the extent to which the character does not take responsibility for her own feelings and actions
6. Separation - the departure of one character from another character in the story
7. Attachment - the reunion of characters or displays of contact
8. Economic State - references to financial conditions
9. Reflectivity - thinking, reminiscing of past, present, or future life states
10. Impulsivity - acting or behaving without thought
11. Aggression - the display of hostile, injurious or destructive behavior
12. Fear of Self Disclosure - refusal to define problems of the characters which may reveal true life situations
13. Criminality - any references to imprisonment, illegal acts and behavior
14. Religion - any references to religious institutions, gods, or deities

These particular emotional, intellectual, behavioral, and value dimensions were selected because of their relevance in previous research to the kinds of psychological behaviors that were of interest in studying family separation due to incarceration. The observed frequencies of projections that could be classified within each of the 14 dimensions were examined to further understand the perceptions of imprisoned women.

Data Analysis

Response frequencies and relative percentages were tabulated for each item on the 100-item questionnaire. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov, one sample test (Siegel, 1966) was also used to compare observed item distributions with those theoretically derived on a chance basis. All reported results indicated a significant departure from chance with at least a .05 level of confidence. In addition, percentages were calculated for subject references to each of the 14 dimensions in response to individual SAAT pictures.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Questionnaire Findings

Responses on the questionnaire were used to describe the perceptions of imprisoned mothers within a Transactional Analytical framework. These perceptions were classified and interpreted with respect to five major concepts developed in Transactional Analysis theory: ego states, time structuring, stroking, communication, and life positions.

Self-concept of ego states. The allocation of time spent in three ego states--Parent, Adult, or Child--was assessed on the questionnaire. Most women reported significantly low levels of energy when acting towards others in a critical manner. Further, women in both institutions reported reliably low levels of energy expended in manifesting acrimonious behavior. Significant acrimonious behaviors included punishing, looking down on others, hating, and being destructive. A majority of the women also reported more positive behaviors such as being helpful (76.5%), loving and warm (85.3%), protective (55.9%), and supportive (58.8%).

The inmates showed few extremes in perceptions of their cognitive abilities or deterioration of their affective capacities. That is, the women generally felt that they were able to reason (97.0%), make decisions (87.8%), make decisions based on facts (76.4%), and were in touch with what was going on (88.2%).

Time structuring. Within Transactional Analytical theory six ways have been delineated for structuring time: 1) withdrawal, 2) ritualizing, 3) activity, 4) pastime, 5) games, 6) intimacy. Inmates reacted, as was expected, to the question concerning running games on people. The majority of women reported that they spend hardly any time watching the clock in this manner. This may have been related to a high degree of nurturance also expressed by these women. On the other hand, it could have reflected the often observed strategy of giving

investigators what they felt were socially acceptable responses. For example, the women indicated that they frequently expressed simple greetings (79.3%), got things done (82.2%), and were intimate (79.4%).

Stroking. Theoretically, there are two types of strokes that individuals can display--namely, recognition and touching. Recognition is a stroke that is purely verbal in nature. However, touching involves actual physical contact. Both types of strokes let individuals know that they are alive by the fact that others have communicated this to them in some way. The quality of stroking can take three forms: a) positive (warm fuzzies); b) negative (cold pricklies); c) a combination of positive and negative (plastic fuzzies). The quality of stroking was analyzed through questionnaire items.

The results indicated that the distribution of women responding to giving, taking, asking for, and refusing to give positive strokes was not significantly different from a theoretical chance distribution. However, there were significant deviations in the distributions of persons responding to negative strokes. Most women indicated that they could not give, take, or ask for 'cold pricklies'. Similar findings were found with respect to taking and asking for 'plastic fuzzies'. Considering the nature of isolation experienced by these women who have been cut off from their traditional reinforcement networks, the reliance upon one another for positive recognition and touching appears to be paramount.

Communication. In general, most women rated communication between themselves and their children as good (80.4%), direct (86.0%), and with reciprocal flow (62.8%). However, some reported a significant amount of static attached to this communication. Almost all of the women (96.0%) who responded to the questionnaire reported that their children have guardians. Most also indicated that they experienced difficulty when interacting with their children's surrogate parent. The frequency in which communication between the child's parent and guardian occurred also suggested some difficulties. However, the data collected did not address this issue directly, but did indicate the need for future research.

Life positions. The findings indicated a dichotomy with regard to personal life positions. The women seemed undecided as to whether they were OK or not, but were certain that some other adults were. Interestingly, the women consistently felt that neither the children's guardians nor the children themselves were OK. Ambivalent feelings about life positions were expressed by the women about themselves, their children, their children's guardians, and others in general.

Projective Findings

Each of the eight picture cards taken from the SAAT were analyzed individually to gain further insight about the perceptions and feelings of incarcerated mothers.

Card 1. Responses most often elicited by Card 1 (see Figure 1) were Criminality (27.8%), Depression (18.8%), and Reflectivity (13.9%). These responses were more likely to occur within the present temporal orientation than in the past. None of the stories produced reflections into the future. However, Criminality (12.5%) and Depression (14.8%) were expressed as future conditions. Apparently, the women see difficult and sad times for the future.

Card 2. Aggression (48.6%) and Depression (12.1%) were elicited most often by the picture on Card 2 (see Fig. 2). Both Aggression (61.5%) and Depression (46.2%) were also more likely to be seen as present states. Most women viewed aggression as having occurred in the past (25.0%) with the outcome being sadness and depression (38.5%). Stories often reflected loss of friendships as a result of gossip and mistrust.

Card 3. The women were most likely to respond to this card (see Fig. 3) with themes of Depression (22.2%) and Reflectivity (20.2%). Depression responses were more often cited as future (40.9%) conditions rather than present (36.4%) or past (22.7%) conditions. The Reflectivity themes were either in the present (85.0%) or future (15.0%). There were no reflections into the past, a time which elicited mainly feelings of Depression. Again, as with Cards 1 and 2, the future appeared bleak and full of sadness.

Card 4. Themes of Separation (30.5%), Attachment (22.1%) and Depression (18.3%) were revealed by responses to Card 4 (see Fig. 4). Separation themes were most likely to occur in the past (30.0%) and present (27.4%), whereas Attachment themes occurred in the present (72.4%) and future (24.1%). Depression, on the other hand, occurred in the present (62.5%) and past (25.0%). Stories focused on being separated from children, and trying to comfort, console, and reassure the child of togetherness for the future. Attachment responses revealed themes of warmth and nurturance directed by the mother to the child.

Card 5. Card 5 (see Fig. 5) revealed themes of Depression (28.6%) and Reflectivity were considered conditions of the present and future. Another dimension elicited by Card 5 was fear of Self-Disclosure (13.3%). Fear of Self-Disclosure was more likely to occur in the past (64.3%) than either the present (21.4%) or future (14.3%). The women seemed reluctant to identify the problems which were responsible for the depression and the deep thought.

Card 6. Separation (33.1%), Depression (19.0%) and Aggression (10.4%) were the most prevalent reactions to this picture (see Fig. 6). Separation (74.1%) and Depression (67.7%) responses occurred primarily in the temporal orientation. However, Aggression responses were elicited most often in the past (70.6%). Quite often stories indicated that some type of argument or disagreement had transpired which resulted in the departure of the male figure. The departure was accompanied by feelings

of loneliness and despair. The return of the male figure was seen as unlikely, and the future full of hardships.

Card 7. Expressions of Attachment (29.2%), Separation (22.1%), and Elation (14.2%) were evoked by this card (see Fig. 7). Feelings of Attachment and Elations were expressed more often in the present (63.6% & 43.7%) and future (33.0% & 50.0%) than in the past (6.1% & 6.3%). On the other hand, Separation responses occurred in the past (44.0%) more often than in the present (28.0%) or future (25.0%) The familial scene seemed to generate feelings of nurturance, warmth, and love. Although the mother was perceived as being separated from the family, the cohesiveness of the family was projected for the future.

Card 8. The results from Card 8 (see Fig. 8) revealed a pattern similar to that shown in Card 7, with Attachment (38.5%) and Elation (37.5%) being expressed most often. Both pictures depicted family gatherings which elicited feelings of cohesiveness and happiness. This was only one of two cards which stimulated feelings of Elation (41.7%) and Attachment (27.0%) in the future. Stories focused on happy family gatherings with projections of similar reunions in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

It can be deduced from the findings that the children of these Black female prisoners were experiencing some hard times. Mothers generally viewed themselves and their children's guardians with either feelings of ambivalence or outright disdain.

Moreover, feelings of depression and pensiveness pervaded the SAAT stories, suggesting that the female prisoners themselves were also experiencing hard times. The incarcerated mothers projected numerous instances of family separation, and a future dominated by criminality and hopelessness.

Nevertheless, the test materials showed that some women maintained strong feelings of warmth and nurturance toward their children and families. In addition, many mothers reported that communication was important for both mother and child. Although this communication did exist, it was not very frequent and often strained and garbled.

Based upon the above findings it seems important to look for ways to alleviate some of the problems deriving from the separation of Black female prisoners from their children. More field research must be conducted to determine the effects of a mother's delinquency and incarceration on the child's development, and to find better ways for interrupting the cycle of neglect and delinquency.

3. Age at Onset and Duration of Separation as They Relate to Father-Absent Children's Performance on Cognitive Tasks

This study examined the onset of separation to determine how much variance in achievement performance can be explained with the knowledge of the age of the child when the father separated from the family. The type of separation was also

viewed as a moderator variable in marital disruption. This study examined these interactive processes to see how they affected the achievement performance of children. It also examined the contribution of each variable as it served to characterize the precipitative causes and degree of father-absent effects.

Hypotheses

A critical review of the father-absence literature generated three lines of research questions:

To what extent did the objective components of father-absence such as the child's age at the onset and duration of separation serve as predictors of subsequent cognitive performance?

(1) It was hypothesized that the age at onset would be significantly related to the cognitive performance of father-absence;

(2) The age at onset would have significant impact in predicting the cognitive performance of father-absent children;

(3) The duration of separation would be significantly related to the cognitive performance of father-absent children;

(4) The duration of separation would have significant impact on predicting the cognitive performance of father-absent children;

(5) The combined contribution of age at onset of father-absence and duration of separation would have more significant impact than their relative contribution in predicting the cognitive performance of father-absent children;

The second line of research questions examined to what extent the subjective components of father-absence such as the child's assumed responsibility for success and failure in achievement-related situations serve as predictors of subsequent cognitive performance?

(6) It was hypothesized that the degree of assumed responsibility for success (I+) would be significantly related to the cognitive performance of father-absent children;

(7) It was further hypothesized that the addition of the father-absent child's degree of assumed responsibility for success to the combined contribution of age at onset and duration effects would have more significant impact than their relative contribution in predicting the cognitive performance of father-absent children;

(8) It was hypothesized that the father-absent child's degree of assumed responsibility for failure (I-) would be significantly related to the subsequent cognitive performance;

The third line of research questions examined the extent to which the combined contributions of both objective and subjective components of father-absence rather than relative contributions serve as more significant predictors of children's cognitive performance;

(9) It was hypothesized that the addition of the child's assumed degree of responsibility for success and failure to

the combined contribution of age at onset and duration would have a more significant impact on cognitive performance than their relative contributions.

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Design

This study was a factorial design. Three groups of father-absent boys and girls (i.e., separated, divorced and incarcerated) were examined on several intellectual-academic achievement performance variables.

The dependent variables or criteria investigated were: Reading and Arithmetic subtests of the Wide Range Achievement Test (Jastak and Jastak, 1976). The independent variables or predictors were: the father-absent child's age at the onset of separation, duration (i.e., number of years since the father left), and the possible mediating influence of variables such as the sex of the child, type of marital separation condition, and orientations for success or failure in academic situations.

Subjects

One hundred and twenty-one father-absent families from the metropolitan Washington area served as subjects. There were three groups: separation (n-64), divorced (n-33) and incarcerated (n-24). Each respondent was paid $15 for participating in the study. The children's ages ranged from 5 to 15 years old, with 47% of the sample being father-absent boys.

Instruments

This study employed the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) and Crandall's Intellectual-Achievement Responsibility Questionnaire (IAR). The WRAT (Jastak and Jastak, 1976) is a paper and pencil technique which assesses the children's writing, spelling, word recognition and arithmetic computation skills. The WRAT also serves as a measure of intelligence and it has been standardized for children between the ages of 5 years to 11 years, 11 months old (level 1). The WRAT has been standardized for different ethnic groups, specifically Blacks. The present study employed the reading and arithmetic subtests.

The reading subtest assesses recognition and naming of letters as well as the accuracy of pronunciation of words. The test-retest reliability of the WRAT has varied from .92 to .98 over a twenty-year period (i.e., 1955-1975) (Jastak and Jastak, 1976). Concurrent validity of this subtest is evidenced by a .78 correlation with grade point average (Jastak and Jastak, 1976). The arithmetic subtest focuses on the child's ability to perform written problems, count, solve equations and read number symbols. The test-retest reliability was .85.

Crandall and her associates (1965) developed a scale to assess the degree to which a child believes that he/she is responsible for his/her intellectual or academic successes and failures. The measure consists of 34 forced choice items which

are scored as total I (internal or self), perceived failure total (I-) and perceived success (I+). The underlying assumption of this measure is analogous to the locus of control concept of Rotter (1966). The test-retest reliability of IAR is .69 for total I, .66 for I+ and .75 for I- (all r's are significant at the 1% level). It has been shown that the correlations between I+ and I- consistently show that a child seems to develop his/her concept of assumed responsibility for success and failure at different rates. Chance (1965) suggests that IAR correlates highly with other achievement measures such as arithmetic performance and spelling.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Combined Age at Onset and Duration Effects

The combined contribution of age at onset and duration was significant in predicting the arithmetic and reading performance. Twenty-three percent of the variance in either arithmetic or reading performance was accounted for by the knowledge of the father-absent child's age at onset and the duration of the separation.

Assumed Responsibility for Failure Effects (I-)

The standardized regression coefficient showed that the degree of assumed responsibility for failure (I-) was significantly related to both the arithmetic (bc=.49) and reading (bc=.28) performance of father-absent children. I- accounted for 24% and 8% of the variance in arithmetic and reading performance, respectively.

Assumed Responsibility for Success Effects (I+)

The standardized regression coefficient showed that the degree of assumed responsibility for success was not significantly related to the reading or arithmetic performance of father-absent children. No significant increment to R^2 of arithmetic performance was noted when the assumed responsibility for success variable was included in the regression equation already containing the age at onset and duration variables; nor was there a significant increment to R^2 of reading performance.

Combined Age at Onset, Duration, I+ and I- Effects

Addition of both the assumed success and assumed failure scores to the regression equation already containing age at onset and duration variables explained 17% more of the variance in arithmetic performance and 2% for reading.

In this study, the use of regression analyses enabled us to examine the total contribution of age at onset in predicting the father-absent child's performance on reading and arithmetic tasks. Significant proportions of the variance in the father-absent child's cognitive performance can be explained by knowledge of the age at onset. As expected, the relative importance of the duration variable in predicting the cognitive performance of father-absent children was found for the arithmetic, but not the reading.

Though much of the variance in cognitive performance remains unexplained, the present study offers a good approach to the interpretation of possible consequences of father-absence.

4. The Effects of Labor and Employment on the Female-Head of Household: A Longitudinal Analysis

The focus of this research was on a longitudinal examination of types of single-parent families in relation to:

1) employment/unemployment
2) knowledge and availability of supplemental child care
3) community involvement
4) absent-spouse status
5) effects of maternal employment on the child

Sample by Employment

The 1974 unemployment rate was 10 and 5 percent, for Blacks and whites, respectively. In comparison, this figures to two Blacks unemployed for every white. The labor status of respondents in the present study (N=150) varied according to the type of separation they experienced. Seventy-three percent of divorced samples had a paid job consistently over the duration of the project. Over 50% of all other marital separation groups, with the exception of separated mothers (41%) had and maintained jobs throughout the project, even through the 1974-75 recession. Significant numbers of each group categorized themselves as either self-employed or salaried. Over three-fourths of all

groups with the exception of widows (65%) and incarcerated spouse (data not available) groups were salaried. This statistic peaked to 93% for the small number of male-head of households sampled.

Supplemental Care: Knowledge and Availability

Knowledge of availability of child care or family care centers was evidenced by each type of single-parent family For the same question, over 65% and 68% of the mothers who were employed and unemployed respectively, were aware of a nearby location of adequate day-care facilities. Thus, whether a mother works or not, she seems to be knowledgeable concerning the location of adequate day-care facilities.

Summer Day Camp

The advantages inherent in summer day camp were not readily evidenced by the sample. Almost one quarter of the separated mothers (N=72) did not know where day camp facilities existed in their neighborhood, and 28% felt that their services were not available. When the divorced sample was split into working and non-working mothers, 71% of those who didn't know about the day camp were of the former group. The chi-square significance value (X^2=31.31, 12df, p/.05) suggests that the female heads utilization of summer camp facilities is limited for all groups, except the divorced. It was further found that spouses of the incarcerated do not avail themselves of summer day-camp facilities. These results were substantiated by significant chi-square analyses (X^2= 15.58, 8df, p/.05).

After-Hour School Programs

A departure from the trend of responses to the question of availability of after-school programs arose for women whose spouses were incarcerated. Over forty-five percent of the total sample (N=48) stated that after-hour school programs were not available for their children. All of the respondents who did not know where these facilities were located happen to be working mothers. In the present study, working women with incarcerated spouses seemed less knowledgeable about after-hour school programs for their children than other comparable father-absent groups. Data from other portions of the present study support this general notion and suggest greater and more negative effects of father-absence for spouses of incarcerated men. The chi-square analysis reveals significant effects for the incarcerated group's knowledge of after-school services (X^2=23.26, 8 df, p/.01).

Community Involvement

Though a majority of all the groups agreed with the statement, "Every person should be willing to give up his time whenever his group or community needs him", significant differences were obtained for the separated group only (X^2=10.00, 3df, p/.05). Ninety percent of this group agreed, with 10% undecided. When compared with other groups, this willingness to volunteer may result in creating a more interdependent "assistance-oriented" individual. Consistent with these results is the significant

effect obtained for the separated group on the question "if someone lets a group of his/her friends down, the group is responsible for it (X^2=47.41, 25 df, p/.01). Sixty-four percent of this group strongly disagreed with this statement, thus supporting the more "assistance-oriented" theory for separated groups. In response to the question, "If because of your ability you do more for your community (neighborhood), you should receive credit for it". Over seventy percent of the working separated sample strongly disagreed with this notion (X^2=58.2, 30df, p/.01). This effect was not consistent over time for non-working separated mothers and all other separated mothers and all other separated groups except widows. Non-working widows in the present study (N=4) agreed with working separated women on this question. Sixty-eight percent of the sample strongly disagreed with the stated notion (X^2=26.96, 15df, p/.05). The separated sample consistently evidenced a need to affiliate, that was no more as pronounced for other groups. The financial situation of most of the separated women in our sample was significantly lower than other groups. This lack of financial resources may necessitate a more external, "other-oriented" group. Social policies affecting income modification need to focus on the disparate financial and psychic needs of legally and non-legally separated female-headed families.

Absent-Spouse Status

When the status of work (i.e. working or non-working) was compared to the respondent's knowledge of the absent spouse's work behaviors, the separated women had more complete knowledge than the divorced group. On the first sample, forty-four percent of this sample stated that the agent spouse was indeed working, with 33% not knowing. These results were significant when applied to a chi-square analysis (X^2=28.14, 15df, p/.05), and similar significant effects (X^2=9.88, 3df, p/.05) were obtained for same group on a subsequent administration (fourth) of the research instrument. Of those respondents in the separated group who stated that their absent spouses were working, 41.8% and 2.5% reported his work as full-time and part-time respectively. The chi-square analysis (X^2=20.99, 12df, p/.05) also reveals that 29% of the sample (N=79) did not know the term of the absent parent's work. Most of the spouses of the separated group were salaried (34.6%) with 32.1% not knowing (X^2=26.18, 12df, p/.01). Of interest to note, 43.5% of the widowed group stated that their deceased spouses were skilled workers.

Results from the separated group suggest that 47% of the former spouses were unskilled and 47% semi-skilled. This significant effect (X^2=27.03, 9df, p/.05) reveals consistent differences over time.

Effects of Maternal Employment on Child

Separate ANOVA's were run on all the dependent measures collected on the child. These measures were the following: Piers-Harris, Crandall's IAR (modified version), Gough's scale of sex difference, Coopersmith's self-concept scale (modified version), reading and mathematics scores on the Wide-Range Achievement Test and a measure of racial self-concept developed by the present investigators.

Significant differences were found between the Piers-Harris measure and the employment status of the female-head of household. When second-order analyses were run, numerous relationships of empirical interest highlight the importance of focusing social policy on the needs of the female heads of households. The present study also revealed more pronounced effects of single-parenthood on the children involved. There were decrements or increments in measures of the child's psychological well-being and social development. The above measures with the exception of WRAT were employed in the present study to assess the relationship between maternal employment, types of single-parenthood and the child's socialization patterns.

The six repeated measures aspect of the design revealed significant differences with a decrease in self-concept across all groups over time ($F=4.15$, 5df, $p<.001$). Thus, the separation condition had a negative effect on all children as a function of time (average N=134).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Major conclusions and recommendations resulting from this study are presented below for the benefit and use of the sponsor and other agencies.

Conclusions

The following conclusions derive from the survey of Black parent-absent families in the Washington Metropolitan area. They reflect a variety of analyses and interpretations of the information provided by these Black parent-absent families.

The incidence of single-parent families has risen due to the increasing divorce rate for married couples with children, the rising birth rate among the never married, and a more permissive attitude towards becoming single parents via marital separation. With reference to black families, unemployment, low-income, cultural and social forces have been identified as key factors which threaten the continued existence of the Black nuclear family. Also there is less opportunity for many Black women to establish a monogamous nuclear family due, in part, to the unavailability of Black males because of the high male rates of mortality, incarceration, homosexuality, and interracial marriages.

There were five categories of parent-absent families in the study. This is, the absence of one parent was due to divorce, desertion or separation, death, and incarceration. Parent-

absence with the male parent present, was also included, as well as families where a person other than the male parent was guardian while the mother was incarcerated. The parent-absent families lived in the District of Columbia Metropolitan area. Inmates in Lorton and other penetentiaries were interviewed and gave permission for their spouses to be interviewed.

There were major differences in the attitudes, perceptions, and behavior of the five parent-absent groups. Differences were observed in two major areas: (i) socio-psychological variables affecting parent-absent families, that is, role structures in the family unit, family cohesion, and parent-child relationships; and (ii) the impact of the social systems (legal, educational, economic, health, recreational, religious, and transportation) and their interaction with the family.

Children in the separated group contributed significantly to the financial support of the family. Both this group and the incarcerated group received more financial support from extended family members than any of the other groups. Extended family members seemed to play a significant role in conflict resolution within the incarcerated and separated families than in the widowed and divorced families.

The divorced families were more financially solvent than the others. They were often employed for longer periods of time than others, particularly the incarcerated families. Divorced parents were also significantly more negative towards

the absent spouse than other parent-absent families. Of the parents who go to church, more women with spouses in prison took along their children than any other group. This together with their use of corporal punishment, may have been due to their anxiety about their children's possible entanglement with the legal system and imprisonment.

There were also some similarities across all the groups. Children played an important role in household maintenance activities. Also, the majority of parents in all groups reported cohesiveness within the nuclear family was either very good or good. Most of the families indicated that they visited their family doctor more than any other individual to get advice or help with health-related problems.

Projective tests administered to a group of black female prisoners revealed that certain feelings and perceptions were common to the majority of them. They expressed a great deal of depression and despair regarding their past and present lives; and the future was projected as being even gloomier. They expected family separations and future conflict with the legal system and there were deep feelings of hopelessness.

The majority of incarcerated mothers felt that they had fair to good rapport with their children, though sometimes the relationships were strained. Most of them felt that conjugal visitations should be made mandatory and should be engaged

in frequently. On the whole, the women felt bitter and had low self-esteem. They felt that they had been cheated and that there were no choices open to them.

Most of the mothers believed that community social services offered were inadequate and did not meet their needs. In addition to suffering from the absence of one parent, their children suffered from the added stigma of having an incarcerated parent. Further, when they were discharged from prison, it was difficult to find gainful employment in order to help support their families. They often had to rely on relatives and extended family members to perform some of the family functions.

Recommendations

Societal institutions have not paralleled the changes in family forms. Institutions idealize the two-parent family form and are aimed at enhancing it. Unfortunately, institutions are ill-prepared to provide relevant supportive services to family forms which are different. More policies and intervention programs are needed to aid families who suddenly find themselves with one spouse missing, whether the parent-absence is due to divorce, desertion, death, separation or incarceration. Some current programs may be grouped into three categories: organized family self help groups, professional family services, and existing and proposed legislation.

Self-help organizations provide mutual support to group members in support of and exerting pressure for intervention services specifically geared to single-parent families. Parents Without Partners is one self-help organization which helps divorced or separated parents learn how to cope with their new life. The various activities include discussion groups where individuals can get support and advice of others in similar situations who are responsive to the pain and confusion of marital separations and bereavement.

It has been suggested that the general orientation of Parents Without Partners tend to be geared towards white middle-class families. Hence, Black single-parent families have formed a similar organization called the Sisterhood of Black Single Mothers which is comprised of women who are raising their children alone (Encore, 1977). Membership is granted to women who are separated, divorced, widowed or whose spouses are incarcerated. The objectives of the organization are: (1) to encourage a positive self-image of the Black single mother and instill in her the determination, awareness and strength to rear strong children alone; (2) to provide communication between Black single mothers and the people who have direct influence on their lives--social workers, employers, teachers, landlords; (3) to offer limited financial and unlimited moral support to members in need; and (4) to promote a family atmosphere among the membership as they participate in cultural activities.

Service programs typically exist for female single-parent families. The most frequent problem for single-parent families is financial support for the family. Women who become single parents due to divorce or death experience a sharp drop in income. Sometimes, their economic position is improved by the acquisition of a new spouse, but during the interim they often experience financial hardships. These families run an exceptionally high risk of being poor and currently make up a majority of poor families with children (Ross and Sawhill, 1975).

There is a need to develop opportunities for women to earn an adequate income and to make young women aware of the risks and responsibilities which they are likely to face in their adulthood. Other kinds of social supports are needed such as income maintenance programs. The research literature strongly suggests that it is the kinds of jobs at which women usually work that are the major causes of their relatively low incomes. Occupations in which women traditionally work pay much lower wages than traditionally male occupations. Policies are needed to insure that women are accepted in traditionally male jobs and that young females are channeled into occupations that pay higher wages.

The lack of employment continuity for some women, which may be due to their family responsibilities, may be a cause for the limited success of women in the job market. Social policy

must be sensitive to the transitional nature of sex role expectations within the family. Although increasingly large numbers of women are working, the men generally are not sharing in the care of the children in a meaningful way. As a result, women must often handle two jobs instead of one, putting them at a competitive disadvantage in the labor market (Ross and Sawhill, 1975).

These factors suggest that day care facilities, after school programs, or subsidization of informal child care arrangements might help women plan for and engage in more continuous employment. However, it must be realized that the availability of day-care is unlikely to improve the economic status of women if there are no decent jobs available. Job opportunities are critical and should be one cornerstone for policy directed to meet the needs of parent-absent families.

As long as mothers have major responsibility for the physical care and custody of children, all fathers should be responsible for supporting the children in or out of marriage. A more equitable and effective system should take into account the income position and child care responsibilities of each parent. It should not be tied to any particular set of assumptions about these matters and should not be subject to the opinion of individual judicial decisions.

Another issue confronting some single parents and their children is the need for emotional and psychological support,

particularly at the onset of separation (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1976.) In the case of divorce, most parents are concerned with explaining the separation to children. Some parents find the task too difficult either out of shame, guilt, or because of misplaced concern for the child. The widespread regressive symptomatic behaviors and fearfulness which were observed in some younger children can be partially attributed to the absence of explanation and assurance of parental support (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1976). Some parents experienced bewilderment, anxiety and pain. Some had conscious and unconscious fears, guilt, and feelings of loneliness and depression (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1976).

Counselors in this project attempted to map out the current situation of each parent, economically and legally, their respective educational and employment histories, their current life plans, expected continuities and change. Further, the counselors attempted to formulate an early impression of the central psychological impact of the divorce experience, especially on the self-esteem and of the defensive and varying coping responses to loss.

A second history taking focused on children in which the parent was asked about the child in the context of the parental conflict, the divorce response, the parent's relationship with the specific child and the parental expectations and plans for the future. Parents were asked about the child's understanding

of the divorce, how much the child had shared in the decision-making process and the feelings of the parents, how much he/she had been a party to fights and to angers. In the third interview, a tentative diagnostic formulation was made to establish priorities in the counseling process. Counselors received a full school report of academic and social performance during the preceding year. With this data it was possible to establish the counseling agenda to help parents and children (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1976).

Services to incarcerated parents and their families have focused primarily on incarcerated mothers. Services for imprisoned fathers seem to be incorporated within existing family counseling services at institutions. With respect to children who have incarcerated fathers, Prisoners Families Anonymous (PFA) in New York, attempts to help children cope with this type of separation.

This organization has provided eight children (ages 8 to 13) with a social worker to run group sessions for children whose parents are members of PFA. In talking to the social worker, children deal with anger at the imprisoned parent for causing the separation, confusion as to the reasons why the parent is incarcerated, attitudes that somehow the child will inherit the father's behavior and subsequently be incarcerated, and strained relations with peers because of the child's incarcerated parent.

Aside from group sessions, recreational activities are held for the children and social worker.

Policy recommendations comprise the third area of literature relating to intervention for single-parent families. Sussman (1972) states that most self-help organizations are largely oriented towards adults and are social in nature. A recommendation aimed at this issue is a policy to enable children who need adults to have parents without partners. This would mean developing a genre of eligible adults who could function as members of an "everyday family" (Sussman, 1977). Programs such as "Big Brothers" and "Big Sisters" incorporate this principle to some extent.

Another proposal is the utilization of extended and "everyday" family members as care-givers and socializers. This would suggest providing income to care-giving families for the care of children whose parents are employed. This type of program could operate in conjunction with daycare centers (Sussman, 1977). Finally, it was recommended that there should be universal training for competence in dealing with bureaucracies to survive during and after the divorce.

Staples (1971) suggests that Black female single-parent families can be assisted by having an adequate guaranteed income, governmental commitment to a comprehensive program of child development, a subsidized adoption program and birth control services, including abortion. However, these services should be organized into a community-controlled comprehensive

health program, and any governmental policy to help Black families should recognize the desire of Blacks to control their own community and destiny.

Clay and Kienast (1975) suggest ways that there can be joint relationships between private and public agencies to establish and implement a meaningful delivery system which would provide comprehensive services to young children and their families.

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